

The President's Daily Brief

July 7, 1976

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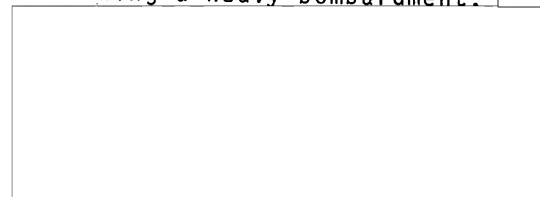
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LEBANON: *Leftist and Palestinian forces intensified their attacks yesterday on Christian villages in northern Lebanon.*

The new offensive is in retaliation for the continuing Christian assault on Tall Zatar refugee camp in Beirut and is intended to draw Christian forces away from the camp. The thrust of the Palestinian-leftist attack has been through Christian areas populated mainly by Greek Orthodox communities, which have generally been spared involvement in the war.

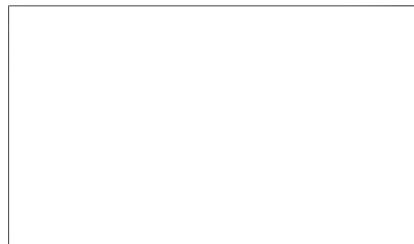
The Palestinians said yesterday they had taken the town of Chekka following a heavy bombardment. 25X1



Chekka is astride one of the few 25X1 Christian-controlled access routes to the larger Christian town of Zagharta--the home town of President Franjiyah--which may be the ultimate target of the Palestinian-leftist offensive. Although Zagharta is relatively well defended and has withstood numerous attacks from surrounding Muslim villages, it is located on the periphery of the Christian core area and could be blockaded.

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The Palestinian offensive in the north has dampened hopes for an early resumption of serious negotiations.

According to press reports, the Syrians sent Libyan Prime Minister Jallud to Beirut on Monday with a "new" peace plan. The plan is in fact only a restatement of previous Syrian demands that the Palestinians return captured assets of the Syrian-controlled Saiqa organization and accept as a basis of negotiations the political reform agreement brokered by Damascus last January. In exchange, the Syrians would resume high-level settlement talks and negotiate a timetable for the withdrawal of their troops from Lebanon.

The Syrians apparently hope that the Palestinians' losses in Beirut will force them to reconsider. Damascus also probably hopes that Foreign Minister Khaddam, who made a surprise trip to Moscow on Monday, will be able to elicit Soviet help in pressing Palestinian leaders to accept Syria's ground rules for negotiations.

* * *

CHINA: The death yesterday of Chu Te, a Politburo member and leading moderate spokesman, has somewhat altered the balance of power in the party leadership.

Despite his 90 years, Chu reportedly was outspoken in defense of ousted vice premier Teng Hsiao-ping and scornful of some of the party's younger, more radical leaders. Chu was a highly respected party elder, and his moderate views probably played an important role in containing the anti-Teng campaign.

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Chu's death reduces to five the number of people on the Politburo's elite standing committee. Of these, only Defense Minister Yeh Chien-ying can clearly be counted as a member of the moderate camp. Premier Hua Kuo-feng, also a standing committee member, has apparently avoided firm factional alliances, although his policy preferences appear to be generally moderate.

With yet another vacancy at the highest level of the party--four standing committee members have died in just over one year--the jockeying for position in anticipation of the post-Mao era is likely to intensify further.

Chu's funeral, which probably will take place in a few days, should be the occasion for the first major leadership turnout since the funeral of Chou En-lai in January. It will provide an indication of whether any of Teng Hsiao-ping's second-echelon associates have also fallen victim to the campaign against him.

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SUDAN: Elements of the ultraconservative Ansar religious sect apparently played a major role in the abortive coup last Friday, which evidently had substantial Libyan backing.

The Ansar sect, which has long been at odds with President Numeiry, has about three million members scattered throughout the central part of the country. The intended beneficiary of the coup attempt was Ansar leader Sadiq al-Mahdi, who has been living in exile in Libya for the past few years.

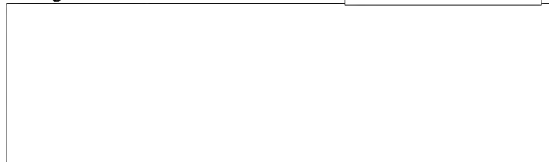
Libyan President Qadhafi almost certainly provided material support for the coup plotters and may have facilitated the secret return

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of some exiled Ansar members to help organize the move. Sudan's close identification with Egyptian President Sadat and his Middle East negotiating policy probably is at the root of Libya's intriguing against Numayri.

Sudan broke diplomatic relations with Libya yesterday. Numayri is playing up the coup attempt as a Libyan-directed invasion requiring urgent UN attention. 25X1



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The Sudanese government has imposed special security precautions that will remain in effect for the next few days.

A dusk-to-dawn curfew has been established, and a 1,500-man Sudanese brigade that has been stationed along the Suez Canal since October 1973 has been airlifted back to Sudan.

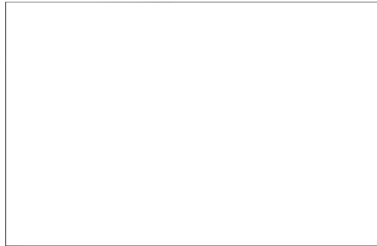
Numayri's hold on power will continue to be determined largely by his ability to retain the loyalty of key military units. Any moves to censure the army for its reported tardiness in coming to Numayri's defense last week could weaken his standing with the armed forces.

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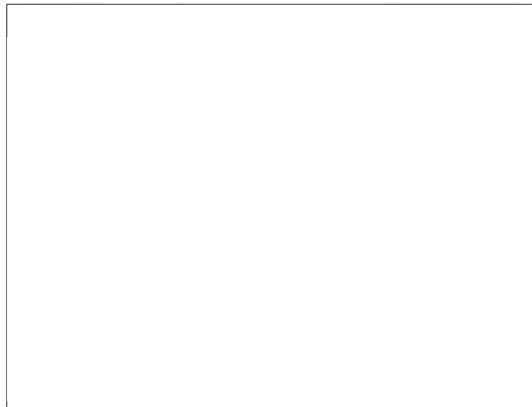
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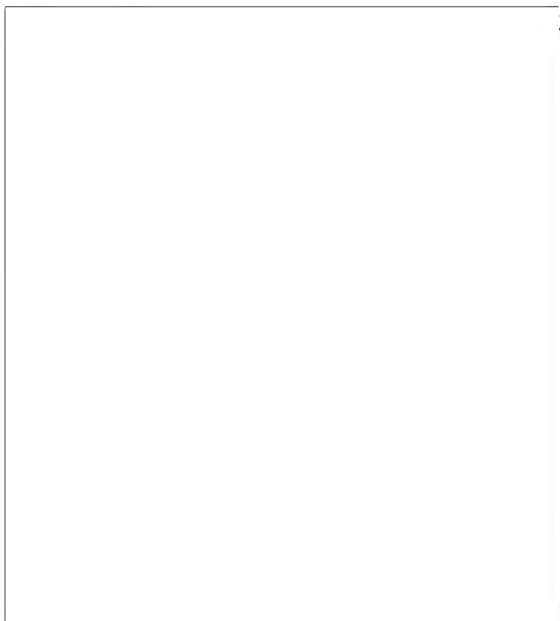


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*The USSR may be prepar-
ing its people for in-
creased Soviet or Cuban
support for guerrilla
operations against
Rhodesia.*

A Pravda column of July 2 labeled as "straightforward military aggression" Rhodesia's recent air strikes and cross-border operations against Mozambique and its alleged "diversionary" acts against Zambia. Pravda also noted the Rhodesian government's threats to take punitive military action against Tanzania and other black African states bordering Rhodesia and suggested that such threats are part of a Rhodesian-South African plan to suppress the Rhodesian 25X1 insurgents.

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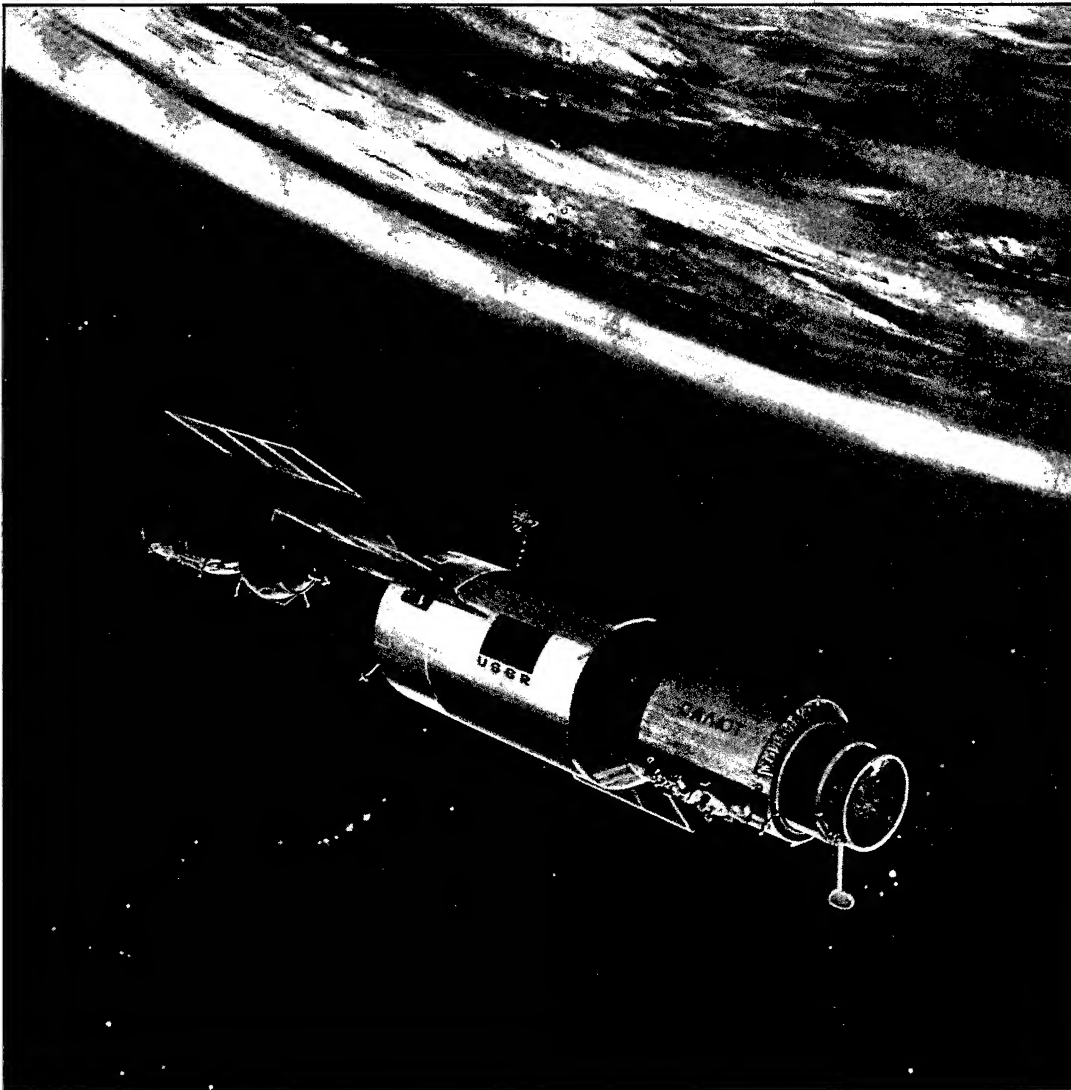
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*The Chinese artillery
shelling of a small is-
land near Kinmen (Que-
moy) last weekend ap-
parently was a response
to Chinese Nationalist
firing at the same is-
land several hours ear-
lier.*

We still do not have sufficient information to explain the unusual air and naval activity that has occurred during the past two months in southern Fukien Province opposite Taiwan. It is evident, however, that the activity is not of a magnitude that would suggest a Chinese attack on Nationalist territory, a judgment Nationalist officials have also made.

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Soyuz 21

*Artist's concept of Soyuz 21 (smaller vehicle) as it is docking
with Salyut 5, the military space station (large vehicle).*

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[REDACTED]

The spacecraft, which has a two-man crew, probably will dock today with the Salyut 5 space station launched on June 22.

[REDACTED] 25X1

The cosmonauts probably will remain aboard Salyut 5 for about 90 days. A manned mission of this duration would break the record of 84 days established by the US Skylab 2 in 1974.

* * *

Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez' address to the Spanish people last night may help break the deadlock in negotiations on a new cabinet and persuade centrist oppositionists to join the cabinet.

Suarez pledged to accelerate the pace of political reforms and invited the opposition to cooperate in the struggle to achieve a "modern democracy." He made no effort to pander to the far right.

So far, members of Christian and Social Democratic factions--groups that have refused to join the opposition coalition with the Communists--have turned down cabinet posts pending further assurances about the new government's commitment to political liberalization. King Juan Carlos [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] seems determined to have a government that will not discourage leftist cooperation.

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